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Animal Industry Division
Beef and Sheep Branch

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HOW TO MAKE MONEY IN THE SHEEP BUSINESS

A Series of Timely Articles Intended To
Help Sheep Producers Improve Their Net Income

John Knapp
Sheep Specialist
Alberta Agriculture, Airdrie

Article IV

Are There Alternatives To A 300% Lamb Crop?

You may recall in Article III that we came to some dismal conclusions about the level of debt a sheep operation could support. Based on a feeding period of 200 days at 5 lb. of hay per day the total cash cost to keep a ewe through one full year averaged $94.20 across Alberta. To grow a lamb to 105 lbs. cost us $22.57 on concentrates and $4.17 on low cost community pasture. Putting these costs together and assuming a return of 80¢/lb. we concluded that a sheep operation which was growing lambs out on concentrates could not carry any debt load whatsoever lambing at less than 300%. The situation looked somewhat better when lambs were reared on low-cost community pasture, but still, a minimum 225% lamb crop was required before our sheep operation could carry any debt load.

Many people who read these figures threw their hands up in despair. Making money in the sheep business, they felt, was an impossible task. Not so. Here are four realistic management options which might make sheep production in Alberta profitable at lower lambing percentages:

1. Reduce ewe body size to 150 lbs. The feed costs in Article III were based on an assumed ewe body size of 175 lb. Many commercial sheep operations in Alberta have ewes which range in size from 175-200 lbs. When the heaviest lamb these operations might ship is only 112 lb. it makes little sense to keep these monster ewes with their enormous feed requirements.

One obvious method of reducing ewe body size to 150 lbs. is to switch to smaller breeds such as the Polypay or Finn-Dorset cross. However, there could be a penalty in making this switch. A breed's ability to produce rapid A.D.G. at the lamb stage is usually reflected in large mature body size. We all know, for example, that the fast growth rate of the Suffolk breed results in large adult ewes. The slower growth rate of the Dorset breed results in smaller adult ewes. However, if we switch to smaller breeds the feed we save by keeping smaller ewes may be offset by the additional feed required to finish slower-growing lambs. The obvious solution to this problem is to be certain that if we switch to these smaller, slower-growing ewe breeds we use the fastest growing terminal sires available: ie. Suffolk or Hampshire rams which have very high 100 day R.O.P. indexes.

If we decide we want to keep ewe breeds with the genetic capacity to mature at heavier weights we may still limit them to 150 lbs at maturity by nutritionally restricting their their growth rate at the yearling stage. This can be dangerous and

should not be attempted until 30 days after weaning. However, a well fed yearling may add 35-40 lbs of skeletal and muscle growth during her maintenance period. It is quite acceptable to reduce her plain of nutrition slightly at this stage so that she only adds 15 lbs to her body weight, thereby maturing around the 150 lb mark. This will not inhibit her genetic capacity to produce.

This reduction in ewe body size would reduce our feed costs by 12-14%. In Article III the annual cost of hay and grain for our 175 lb. ewe was $45.68. Assuming we are feeding only 88% as much feed we end up saving $5.48/ewe.

2. Shorten Feeding Period From 200 to 120 Days

In southern Alberta where stubble fields usually remain open until Christmas and where green grass comes in early April feeding periods of 105-130 days are common. The fact that many ewes in Alberta are fed for approximately 120 days as opposed to 200 days reduces feed costs to 60% of the amount assumed in Article III. The combined effect of a smaller ewe and a shorter feeding period reduces our feed costs to: $45.68 x .88 x .6 = $24.12. Our net saving in feed costs is therefore $45.68 - $24.12 = $21.56!

The option of a shorter feeding period is not available to many sheep producers in northern Alberta. However, readily available alternate feed sources such as low-cost screenings and free feedmill sweepings combined with much cheaper hay can have the same net effect in dramatically reducing feed costs for producers in the northern part of the province.

3. Increase Market Weight of Lamb From 105 To 112 lbs.

112 lb lambs of course are entirely acceptable to packing plants in Western North America. Let's assume that because of a poor feed conversion ratio at heavier weights it costs us 40¢/lb. to add the additional 7 lb. liveweight to a lamb. The cost of adding 7 additional lbs. therefore is 40¢ x 7 = $2.80. Assuming a return of 80¢/lb. the extra net income we derive from increasing our lamb weights by 7 lbs. is 7 x 80¢ = $5.60 - $2.80 = $2.80/lamb.

4. Hire $25,000 Farm Labour and Double Flock Size From 500 To 1000 Ewes

The costs and returns in Article III were based on a flock of 500 ewes. A key question is what happens to our level of productivity when we increase to 1000 ewes. Almost all of the "wrecks" which I see in the sheep business occur in attempting to scale up from 100 ewes to 500 ewes. You can carry hay, grain, and water a long way to a small group of 100 ewes.

If you attempt to do this with 500 ewes, not only do you suffer staggering lamb losses, but you grow old quickly. To successfully run a 500 ewe flock you must have mechanised and streamlined your operation to the point where feeding and watering your animals takes not more than two hours/day. The major portion of your time is thus spent as shepherd and manager rather than labourer. If you have mastered a system which will allow you to successfully manage 500 ewes, a few minor changes will allow you to successfully manage 1000 ewes. The small decrease in productivity which might result from scaling up to this level would certainly be offset by economies of scale.

$25,000 worth of farm labour will probably hire a full time skilled shepherd at $20,000 plus $5,000 worth of additional help during peak labour periods such as lambing and shearing. Including the labour of the flock owner the 1,000 ewe flock is therefore about a 2¼ man unit.

Now, let's look at the impact of these four management changes at lambing percentages marketed of 150, 175, and 200%. (Remember, in Article III we assumed that the lambing percentage marketed was 25 percentage points lower than the percent born. If you lambed at 225% therefore you could be expected to market a 200% lamb crop.)

Table I below provides a detailed example of how the figures in Tables II and III are calculated. Let's assume we are lambing in the spring and marketing a 200% lamb crop at 80¢/lb. You will recall from Article III that the amortization factor of .1547 is based on an average 15 year amortized loan at 13% interest.

TABLE I: EXAMPLE OF HOW "MAXIMUM DEBT FARM CAN CARRY" IS CALCULATED

Assume spring lambing costs, 225% born, 200% marketed, price 80¢/lb.

Income/ewe from lamb sales	112 lbs x 2 x 80¢ =	$179.20
Plus income/ewe from sale of wool and culls		5.00
Equals gross income/ewe *		184.20
Less annual cash cost/ewe		-72.64
Less cost of rearing 2.25 lambs	($4.17 + $2.80) x 2.25 =	-15.68
Less cost/ewe of higher lambing % (more milk replacer, higher mortality, longer feeding period $4/ewe at 150% marketed, $6 at 175% and $8 at 200%)		-8.00
Less risk factor (10% of cost of production)		-9.63
Equals net income/ewe		78.25
Times 1000 ewes		x 1000
Equals net return/flock		78,250
Less family living expenses		-15,000
Less hired farm labour		-25,000
Equals residual for debt servicing		38,250
Divided by amortization factor		.1547
Equals maximum debt farm can carry		$247,253

* One income source we have not included is government subsidy. Over the last four years this has averaged $6.40/ewe (1981 - $10/ewe on Provincial Beef & Sheep Support Program; 1982 - approximately $4.76/ewe federal subsidy on lamb and wool; 1983 - approximately $.84/ewe federal subsidy on wool; 1984 - $10 Provincial Drought Relief payment on approximately 70% of ewes in Alberta.) However, as the growing debt level of most national and state governments in the western world incurs mounting service charges the temper of tax payers grows shorter. It is clear that western governments cannot long continue the wholesale distribution out of alms and benefactions to all segments of society. It would be foolhardy therefore to pencil government subsidy into our long term debt repayment plans. For now, let's just place these subsidies into the category of unexpected windfalls.

CONTAGIOUS ABORTION AND LAMB CROPS

In the last issue of Sheep Notes and News, John Knapp outlined the need for significantly improving Alberta's lamb crop from the current average of 120%. Obviously, in order to achieve this goal, attention can be focused firstly upon maximizing fertility at breeding, and secondly upon ensuring that the foregoing increase is transmitted through pregnancy and lambing and then into the feedlot. In this context, the remark was once made; "Before trying to produce more lambs, it is wise to see that those born survive". Very appropriate.

If an increased number of lambs conceived are to survive the neonatal period, a high level of husbandry, which would extend through pregnancy and especially through lambing and nursing, is necessary. Starvation, chilling, and injuries associated with overcrowding and diseases are all commonplace at and shortly after lambing, and the availability of reserve facilities and assistance are highly desirable in the event of unexpected weather extremes or an unanticipated rush of lambings.

Abortion diseases, generally speaking, result in insignificant losses when compared to lambing losses, but occasionally abortions strike even the best operations with disastrous consequences. Most abortions are not caused by contagious diseases and, in a reasonably fed and housed flock, a level of up to 5% might be regarded as normal. These abortions are the result of accidents, a variety of individual disease conditions affecting the ewe, and sometimes the fetus is defective. These losses are largely unavoidable.

The first step to take when a ewe aborts is to isolate her from the flock, and if practical, disinfect the area where she aborted. This is important because should a contagious disease be present, the fetus, membranes and discharge will be teeming with germs waiting to cause further trouble in a pregnant ewe which might eat contaminated feed or bedding.

The two most common causes of contagious abortion in Alberta are campylobacteriosis (formerly know as vibriosis) and chlamydial or enzootic abortion. Both result in abortion in late pregnancy, stillbirths, and weak, newborn lambs. The signs are thus similar and an accurate diagnosis can be made only through the examination of fetuses and membranes at a veterinary laboratory.

Other, less frequent causes of abortion, are sheep brucellosis which is normally associated with reduced fertility in the ram, and listeriosis. The latter disease occurs when ewes eat silage which sometimes harbours the offending bacterium. In Eastern Canada, toxoplasmosis is one of the most common abortion diseases in sheep. It appears to be mainly transmitted when infected barn cats defecate into sheep feed. Prevention is obvious. While we have not yet diagnosed this abortion in Alberta, the infection is present and producers should pay heed to the mechanism under which it occurs.

Unfortunately it is difficult to control contagious abortion once an outbreak is underway. Antibiotics are sometimes included in the feed in an attempt to

prevent further loss, but the practice is not considered to be satisfactory (it is also expensive) unless it is initiated very early in the course of the disease before the majority of the flock has been infected. Unfortunately, by the time abortions become apparent, infection is probably widespread.

Producers should be aware that a higher number than usual of abortions, etc. might mean that a contagious disease has entered the flock. This is especially likely if problems follow upon the purchase of ewes of unknown health status as from a dispersal sale. If a contagious disease is diagnosed, steps can be taken to limit losses at the next lambing although fortunately sheep abortion problems are said to have a low repeatability - the next lamb crop should be a good deal better. Aborting ewes develop a strong resistance to the offending germ and they should, if practical, be retained rather than sold and replaced with susceptible ewes. It should be borne in mind, however, that under some circumstances in chlamydial abortions, pregnant ewes will become infected but will not abort until their next pregnancy.

Replacement ewes are best purchased from reliable operations free of abortion problems. Whatever the source, replacements should arrive prior to the breeding season when they may be mixed with the resident flock. It is not good to buy pregnant ewes and to mix them with pregnant ewes of the home flock.

A good vaccine is available for protection against campylobacteriosis. It is administered prior to breeding and again 2-3 months afterwards. A chlamydial vaccine is also available but its effectiveness in Canada is questionable. More detailed advice on abortion diseases, their diagnosis and prevention may be obtained from your veterinarian, a veterinary laboratory or from a sheep specialist.

Remember, if one is fortunate not to be troubled by abortions, the real test will be the ability to care for and to save the newborn lambs. May good husbandry, good weather, and good luck be on your side.

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1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST

John Knapp - Alberta Ram Test Station Manager

In October 1984 seven Alberta Breeders contributed rams to the first central test for wool breeds conducted at a Canadian Ram Test Station. The test, which was considered a pilot project, was modelled after the tests for wool breeds which take place at many of the US Test Stations. White-faced ram lambs were received at approximately six to eight months of age. After a fifteen day warm up period, they were sheared and placed on a 120 day test for body weight gain and wool growth. The table below summarizes the results of the test:

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST

BREED	NUMBER ENTERED	A.D.G. 120 DAY TEST TO YEARLING STAGE KG.	A.D.G. 120 DAY TEST TO YEARLING STAGE LBS.	ADJ. 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT KG.	ADJ. 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT LBS.	FINENESS SHOULDER	FINENESS BRITCH	ADJ. 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH MM.	ADJ. 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH IN.
Rambouillet	12	.225	.496	9.113	20.09	59	57	92	3.68
Columbia	10	.227	.500	9.244	20.38	56	54	113	4.52
Corriedale	1	.199	.439	9.097	20.06	54	52	148	5.92
Polypay	2	.187	.412	6.211	13.69	55	52	113	4.52

The overall index for each ram was based on both the economic importance and the heritability of the different traits evaluated. It was developed in consultation with Dr. John Vesely of the Lethbridge Research Station and looks like this:

(ADG) (FLEECE) (AV. FINENESS)
OVERALL INDEX = .7(INDEX) + .3 [(.75 WT. INDEX) + .15(INDEX) + .1(STAPLE LENGTH INDE

All indexes of course were computed only within breed.

Those rams which indexed 100 or higher, passed the veterinarians cull (Feb. 15) and pass the final cull (done the same day as the ram lamb cull - approximately June 21) will be eligible for entry in the 1985 Alberta Ram Test Station Sale - Saturday, June 29.

Here is an explanation of the measurements taken:

A.D.G. - over 120 days. On test and off test weights were an average of two weighings to improve accuracy.

ADJ. 365 Day Greasy Fleece Weight - Rams were sheared just before and just after test. Their wool weight was divided by 123 days and multiplied by 365 days to give adjusted 365 day fleece weight. Because wool growth is not uniform throughout the year, the weights obtained under relatively good feeding conditions may result in a mild exaggeration of actual 365 day fleece weight. Wool weight has not been adjusted for initial body weight.

Shoulder and Britch Fineness - Four inch square samples taken from both shoulder and britch were visually graded by Les Toth, Canadian Co-operative Woolgrowers, Lethbridge. Although micron tests are extremely expensive ($50/ram) we hope to have these tests performed on next year's rams.

Staple Length - Measurements were taken at six different sites - shoulder, mid section, britch along both sides of the animal - and the results averaged. Staple length was deemed the distance between body surface and the top of the wool as the wool naturally lay on the animal.

Face Score - Five is completely woolblind. One is completely open faced. Face score was not used in computing the overall index.

Testicular Circumference - Measured at the widest point. Naturally wide variations in testicular circumference occur on the basis of breed, age and body size. Testicular circumference was not used in computing the overall index.

COMMENTS:

The pilot wool breeds test appears to have been relatively successful. However, one major change has been approved by contributors for next year's test: The 70% of the total index value which is based of the animal's growth rate in future tests will be calculated on the basis of his growth rate at the ram lamb stage. It was felt this change was important because to the end user of a pure breed testing program - the commercial producer - the genetic ability to grow fast as a lamb in many times more important than the ability to grow fast as a yearling.

Many thanks to Olds College for providing the test facilities and to breeders who contributed to this pilot project. Watch for the top end of the wool breeds test rams at the 1985 Alberta Ram Test Station Sale.

1984-85 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST RESULTS

RAMBOUILLET RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	OVER-ALL INDEX	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) KG	(LBS)	A.D.G. INDEX	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT KG	(LBS)	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT INDEX	FINENESS SH.	FINENESS BR.	FINENESS INDEX SH.	FINENESS INDEX BR.	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH MM	(IN)	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH INDEX	STATUS
OLDS COLLEGE (REG RADKE) FARM MGR. OLDS, AB TOM 1P0 556-8261	OCL138S	1	96	.219	(.483)	97	8.41	(18.54)	92	56	54	95	95	31	(1.24)	100	CULL INDEX
	OCL58S	2	110	.236	(.520)	105	11.56	(25.49)	127	56	54	95	95	36	(1.44)	116	OKAY
	OCL30S	3	102	.225	(.496)	100	9.84	(21.69)	108	60	58	102	102	33	(1.32)	106	CULL TESTICLES
	OCL71S	4	116	.251	(.553)	112	12.23	(26.96)	134	56	54	95	95	36	(1.44)	116	OKAY
	OCL177S	5	115	.263	(.580)	117	10.19	(22.46)	112	62	60	105	105	32	(1.28)	103	OKAY
	OCL17S	6	84	.182	(.401)	81	7.84	(17.28)	86	60	58	102	102	29	(1.16)	94	CULL INDEX
ALVIN ROBBINS BOX 298 PINCHER CREEK, AB TOK 1WO 627-4568	RYA14S	17	98	.234	(.516)	104	7.29	(16.07)	80	58	56	98	98	29	(1.16)	94	CULL INDEX
	RYA16S	18	78	.172	(.379)	76	6.93	(15.28)	76	58	56	98	98	30	(1.20)	97	CULL INDEX
	RYA40S	19	90	.195	(.430)	87	8.55	(18.85)	94	56	55	95	96	30	(1.20)	97	CULL INDEX
	RYA13S	20	101	.231	(.509)	103	8.71	(19.20)	96	58	56	98	98	29	(1.16)	94	OKAY
ROBERT & AMY JACKSON BOX 445 DIDSBURY, AB TOM OWO 335-4348	NLU85S	25	103	.235	(.518)	104	9.18	(20.24)	101	58	56	98	98	31	(1.24)	100	OKAY
	NLU24S	26	107	.253	(.558)	112	8.63	(19.03)	95	66	63	112	109	29	(1.16)	94	OKAY

1984-85 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST RESULTS

COLUMBIA RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	OVER-ALL INDEX	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) KG	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) (LBS)	A.D.G. INDEX	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT KG	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT (LBS)	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT INDEX	FINENESS SH.	FINENESS BR.	FINENESS INDEX SH.	FINENESS INDEX BR.	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH MM	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH (IN)	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH INDEX	STATUS
GARNET	RGD25S	7	102	.236	(.520)	104	8.85	(19.51)	96	50	48	89	89	46	(1.84)	121	OKAY
RUNCIE	RGD49S	8	84	.180	(.397)	79	8.54	(18.83)	92	56	52	100	96	40	(1.60)	105	CULL INDEX
BOX 34	RGD31S	9	PULLED OFF TEST - CHRONIC RHUEMATISM														
BLACKIE,	RGD41S	10	112	.269	(.593)	119	8.71	(19.20)	94	54	53	96	96	42	(1.68)	111	OKAY
AB TOL 0J0	RGD83S	11	103	.242	(.534)	107	8.30	(18.30)	90	58	56	104	104	38	(1.52)	100	OKAY
684-3441																	
OLGA	RBM009S	12	130	.316	(.697)	139	10.52	(23.19)	114	56	52	100	96	38	(1.52)	100	OKAY
MAWSON																	
BOX 34																	
BLACKIE,																	
AB TOL 0J0																	
684-3441																	
ALLEN &	XYO424S	21	92	.195	(.430)	86	10.27	(22.64)	111	58	56	104	104	38	(1.52)	87	CULL INDEX
VIRGINIA	XYO440S	22	90	.198	(.437)	87	8.92	(19.67)	97	58	56	104	104	33	(1.32)	84	CULL INDEX
DOBLER	XYO401S	23	86	.178	(.392)	78	9.85	(21.72)	107	58	56	104	104	32	(1.28)	84	CULL INDEX
RR 2	XYO423S	24	SENT TO SLAUGHTER DURING WARM-UP PERIOD - INTERNAL INFECTION														
BLUFFTON,																	
AB TOC 0M0																	
843-3629																	

1984-85 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST RESULTS

POLYPAY RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	OVER-ALL INDEX	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) KG	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) (LBS)	A.D.G. INDEX	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT KG	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT (LBS)	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT INDEX	FINENESS SH.	FINENESS BR.	FINENESS INDEX SH.	FINENESS INDEX BR.	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH MM	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH (IN)	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH INDEX	STATUS
JOHN BALDERSON BOX 643 MAGRATH, AB T0K 1J0 758-6392	8364	13	91	.163	(.359)	88	6.14	(13.54)	99	56	52	102	100	34	(1.36)	89	CULL INDEX
	8368	14	110	.210	(.463)	112	6.28	(13.84)	101	54	52	98	100	41	(1.64)	108	OKAY

CORRIEDALE RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	OVER-ALL INDEX	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) KG	FINAL A.D.G. (120 DAYS) (LBS)	A.D.G. INDEX	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT KG	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT (LBS)	Adj 365 DAY GREASY FLEECE WEIGHT INDEX	FINENESS SH.	FINENESS BR.	FINENESS INDEX SH.	FINENESS INDEX BR.	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH MM	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH (IN)	Adj 365 DAY STAPLE LENGTH INDEX	STATUS
PAT WATSON GEN. DEL. PINCHER CREEK, AB T0K 1W0 627-2082	PVF20S	16	100	.199	(.439)	100	9.10	(20.06)	100	54	52	100	100	50	(2.00)	100	OKAY

1984-85 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST RESULTS

RAMBOUILLET RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	FACE SCORE	TESTICULAR CIRCUMFERANCE CM	(IN)
OLDS	OCL138S	1	2	32.0	(12.48)
COLLEGE	OCL58S	2	4	34.5	(13.46)
(REG RADKE)	OCL30S	3	4	32.5	(12.68)
FARM MGR.	OCL71S	4	4	34.5	(13.46)
OLDS, AB	OCL177S	5	4	30.5	(11.90)
TOM 1PO	OCL17S	6	3	30.0	(11.70)
556-8261					
ALVIN	RYA14S	17	2	29.0	(11.31)
ROBBINS	RYA16S	18	2	29.5	(11.51)
BOX 298	RYA40S	19	2	31.5	(12.29)
PINCHER	RYA13S	20	3	31.0	(12.09)
CREEK, AB					
TOK 1WO					
627-4568					
ROBERT &	NLU85S	25	3	34.5	(13.46)
AMY	NLU24S	26	2	35.5	(13.85)
JACKSON					
BOX 445					
DIDSBURY,					
AB TOM OWO					
335-4348					

1984-85 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST RESULTS

COLUMBIA RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	FACE SCORE	TESTICULAR CIRCUMFERENCE CM	(IN)
GARNET	RGD25S	7	2	32.5	(12.68)
RUNCIE	RGD49S	8	2	32.0	(12.48)
BOX 34	RGD31S	9	PULLED OFF TEST - CHRONIC RHUEMATISM		
BLACKIE,	RGD41S	10	2	34.0	(13.26)
AB T0L 0J0	RGD83S	11	2	34.5	(13.46)
684-3441					
OLGA	RBM009S	12	2	34.0	(13.26)
MAWSON					
BOX 34					
BLACKIE,					
AB T0L 0J0					
684-3441					
ALLEN &	XYO424S	21	2	28.5	(11.12)
VIRGINIA	XYO440S	22	2	34.0	(13.26)
DOBLER	XYO401S	23	2	31.5	(12.29)
RR 2	XYO423S	24	SENT TO SLAUGHTER DURING WARM-UP PERIOD - INTERNAL INFECTION		
BLUFFTON,					
AB T0C 0M0					
843-3629					

1984-85 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION - WOOL BREEDS TEST RESULTS

POLYPAY RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	FACE SCORE	TESTICULAR CIRCUMFERENCE CM	(IN)
JOHN BALDERSON BOX 643 MAGRATH, AB T0K 1J0 758-6392	8364	13	2	30.0	(11.70)
	8368	14	1	30.0	(11.70)

CORRIEDALE RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	FACE SCORE	TESTICULAR CIRCUMFERENCE CM	(IN)
PAT WATSON GEN. DEL. PINCHER CREEK, AB T0K 1W0 627-2082	PVF20S	16	2	27.5	(10.73)

From The Research Bench

"HARD UDDER" BREAKTHROUGH

Mastitis in sheep is well known. Many recognize it as one of the most important reasons for the culling of ewes. However, the disease exists in several different forms and may be caused by one or more of several different infective agents.

The one type of mastitis that many producers are familiar with is the acute, bacterial form characterized by sudden, severe onset and a generally rapid response to administration of the correct antibiotic. Many of the sheep that survive an acute bacterial mastitis, develop a chronic inflammation which will result in permanent damage to the mammary tissue. In on-farm conditions, bacterial mastitis is usually detected in ewes being selected for breeding. It is of low morbidity (doesn't generally cause a drop in ewe condition or performance) relatively high mortality (death rate) but seldom occurs as a flock problem.

Another type of mastitis which didn't fit the description of bacterial mastitis has been observed in sheep across Canada and has commonly been called simply "hard udder". Producers would report a mastitis-like condition which did not respond to antibiotics, yet led to insufficient growth of lambs due to lack of milk, and veterinarians would report the situation as one of high morbidity, low mortality, a sub-clinical character and a chronic course - not at all the same as the acute bacterial mastitis.

A recent paper published in Holland by Van der Molen, Vecht and Houwers deals with this problem and provides strong circumstantial evidence to support their opinion that this "hard udder" syndrome is in fact caused by a virus - the same virus that causes maedi visna in sheep (which is a progressive type of pneumonia).

If this is the case, producers would be wise to consider seriously, in consultation with their veterinarian, a program of culling any hard udder ewes they may have. This is about the only way of ridding your flock of the problem at present, and it is certainly not a problem one wants to have hanging around.

Tig Shafto
Sheep Sense
Manitoba Agriculture
January-February 1985

SCROTAL CIRCUMFERENCE IS AN IMPORTANT MEASUREMENT

by Dr. L. H. Thompson
(Univ. of Illinois)

Attempting to estimate the breeding potential of a new herd sire or young lamb has been a problem of livestock producers for many years. Obviously, a ram that will not sire lambs for one reason or another will leave no genetic contribution to the herd.

Producers have often used lambing performance records of the dam as an indicator of potential fertility when selecting rams since those traits are not exhibited in males. Semen evaluation has also been proven to be very unreliable for any selection program except to

determine if a male is sterile. Several different semen collections and evaluations would in fact be necessary to determine if a male is sterile.

One trait that has emerged as a good indicator of potential fertility is testis size. A scientist in Scotland by the name of Land was the first to determine a positive relationship between testis size in males and prolificacy (number of lambs born) of their daughters. Research in this area also indicates that measurements of testis size are highly correlated to sperm-producing capacity.

Since the male does not experience the interference of lactation on the reproduction process, his sexual state as indicated by testis size may be a better estimation of breeding potential than records of his dam. One must also remember that he receives only half of his genetic makeup from his dam and that what is expressed in his own makeup is the trait of most value. In other words, use figures of testis size or scrotal circumference in preference over performance records of his dam in selecting potential herd bucks.

Testis size is also a very reliable indicator of age at puberty. Measurements on a large number of ram lambs at the University of Illinois indicate that most lambs have reached puberty when scrotal circumference approaches about 30 centimeters (a centimeter (cm) is equal to 0.39 inch). This is also the average of most lambs at about five to seven months of age depending on growth rate and breed. Some lambs or breeds of lambs are designed to grow and mature faster and will therefore demonstrate early testis growth but not necessarily early breeding function unless it coincides with the seasonal breeding pattern characteristic of that herd's genetic background.

Since testicle development is related to purbertal changes, particular attention should be given to this trait if a potential herd buck is to sire replacement ewes. Testis measurements should be taken then at or before the age at which his daughters would be expected to cycle and conceive. If his testicular development is below normal (32 to 34 centimeters at six to seven months of age), he should not be considered as the best prospective herd sire regardless of his other production traits.

Since testis size is also a very good indicator of the status of sperm production in the male and many breeds of sheep have distinct seasonal breeding patterns, scrotal circumference should be measured on all herd sires at least the two-month period prior to breeding season. Mature rams should have a scrotal circumference of about 36 cm or more and should increase slightly just prior to their natural breeding season. If rams are used in several breeding seasons, scrotal circumference should be monitored at least three and preferably four times annually. A significant decrease in scrotal circumference of five to seven centimeters should be taken as a reliable indicator of serious infertility problems. These figures should be recorded and measurement should be taken on a predetermined schedule to best determine breeding potential. The testis and epididymis should also be palpated for signs of infection, scar tissue or unevenness between the paired organs.

In summary, scrotal circumference can be a useful tool in predicating age of puberty, seasonal breeding capacity, potential infertility problems and is also the best indicator to date of potential prolificacy of offspring. It is not a replacement for sound management practices but should be used correctly and regularly in a sound management program.

[NATIONAL WOOL GROWER, August, 1984]

AN IMPORTANT FOOTNOTE TO ARTICLE I: THE IMPACT OF RAILGRADING ON PROFIT MARGIN

In Article I we looked at the advantage of selling lambs liveweight versus railgrade. Our conclusion was that the higher the dressing percent of your lambs the greater the advantage to railgrading. As a rough rule of thumb you may conclude that if not more than ten percent of your lambs are penalized for grading overfat, underfinished or overweight, and if the dressing percent of your shipment is over 48% there is a clear economic advantage to railgrading.

Lambco determines the railgrade price by taking the top end of the liveweight price and dividing by .47. For example, the liveweight price on April 10, this year is 89-92¢. If you divide 92¢ by .47 you will arrive at the figure $1.96 which is in fact the railgrade price on April 10. The important point to note is that the higher the liveweight price, the larger the actual dollar advantage to railgrading if your lambs dress above 48%. For example, in 1983 the price per lamb bottomed out at 52-54¢ live or $1.15 railgrade. Let's suppose you lived several hundred miles from the lamb plant and loaded a 110 lb. lamb on a truck destined for Lambco. When that lamb reached the plant it probably weighed 106 lbs. Assuming you received top liveweight price for that lamb it would have been worth 106 lbs. x 54¢ = $57.24. On the other hand, assuming no tissue shrink took place, if that lamb dressed out at 50% (most lambs under 150 days of age, which have been concentrate fed will dress out at 49-51%) its carcass would have weighed 55 lbs. That lamb railgraded would have been worth 55 lbs. x $1.15 = $63.25. You can see therefore that the advantage to railgrading in this situation worked out to about $6.00.

Let's take that same lamb and ship it today at much higher prices and see what the dollar difference is. On a liveweight basis at 92¢/lb. that lamb would be worth 106 lbs. x 92¢ = $97.52. On the rail, that same lamb would be worth 55 lbs. x $1.96 = $107.80. Now the difference between liveweight and railgrading is about $10! As you can see when the price of lamb increases the actual dollar difference between liveweight price and railgrade price for lambs which dress at a high percentage also increases.

The moral of the story: when lamb prices are high there is even more reason to examine the feasibility of railgrading if you think you have lambs which will dress out at high percentage.

John Knapp
Sheep Specialist
Alberta Agriculture, Airdrie
April 10, 1985

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sheep notes and news

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DON SCHEER APPOINTED HEAD OF NUTRITION 30

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Animal Industry Division
Beef and Sheep Branch

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION HAS RECORD YEAR

By: John Knapp
Sheep Specialist
Alberta Agriculture, Airdrie

More than 250 buyers and spectators were on hand June 29 at Olds College for the 11th Annual Alberta Ram Test Station Barbecue and Sale. The event, which drew buyers from across Canada saw some of the best performance tested ram lambs and yearlings in the nation offered for sale.

With the reserve bid set at $225, 61 of the 64 rams on offer found buyers as gross receipts of $26,610 were obtained. A record average price for ram lambs of $421 was set - breaking the previous record average set in 1982 by $34. The 4 Rambouillet yearlings from the Wool Breeds test averaged $621 and the 1 Polypay yearling fetched $550.

The top indexing ram in the sale was from the Suffolk flock of Mr. Lloyd Pickard of Olds, Alberta. It was the fastest growing ram ever offered for sale from the station with an average daily gain of .698 Kg. per day and sold for $950. Another ram of Mr. Pickard's, not in the sale, unofficially tied the world record of .74 Kg. per day. The high priced ram in the sale, also from Mr. Pickard's flock had an average daily gain of .644 Kg. per day and sold for $1350 to Dr. Hans Flatla of Olds, Alberta. Purchases were made by buyers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario, with several outstanding stud prospects going to out-of-province buyers.

A total of 196 rams from 38 contributors were entered on test this year. As the table below indicates, individual rams in the Suffolk and Columbia breeds established new record growth rates at the Alberta Ram Test Station in 1985.

RECORD GROWTH RATES

11 YEARS OF TESTING AT ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION

SUFFOLK	PICKARD 1985	.736 Kg/day	(1.62 lb/day)
HAMPSHIRE	CECCATO 1983	.637 Kg/day	(1.40 lb/day)
DORSET	FRANCIS 1984	.503 Kg/day	(1.11 lb/day)
COLUMBIA	INGRATTA 1985	.515 Kg/day	(1.14 lb/day)
N.C. CHEVIOT	STEPHEN 1983	.458 Kg/day	(1.01 lb/day)
CORRIEDALE	GRAY 1983	.471 Kg/day	(1.04 lb/day)
RAMBOUILLET	OLDS COLLEGE 1984	.519 Kg/day	(1.14 lb/day)
POLYPAY	BALDERSON 1984	.481 Kg/day	(1.06 lb/day)

Only rams above the station average for A.D.G. for their breed are considered for sale each year. A Culling Committee further rejects rams with incorrect teeth, legs, testicles, etc. from this group so that this year less than one third of the animals entered on test made its way through the screening process to the sale.

Of special note is the first appearance in the sale in 1985 of yearling rams which indexed above 100 on the Wool Breeds test. This test measures the weight, fibre diameter and staple length on wool over a 365 day period from some of the highest indexing white-faced ram lambs to complete the growth rate test. A final index based on 70% of these rams' growth rate index plus 30% of the index on the pool of wool traits will be used to determine entry to the 1986 Ram Test Station Sale.

The following is a summary of the 1985 Ram Test Station Results:

BREED	NUMBER TESTED	A.D.G. KG/DAY	NUMBER SOLD	AVERAGE PRICE (RAM LAMBS)	HIGH PRICE
SUFFOLK	141	.534	37	$442	$1350
HAMPSHIRE	13	.510	6	$317	$ 500
DORSET	20	.383	5	$387	$ 425
RAMBOUILLET	16	.426	4	$390	$ 420
POLYPAY	11	.397	3	$517	$ 525
COLUMBIA	5	.450	1	$275	$ 275
YEARLINGS	25	-	5	$585	$ 775

The following is a summary of test station results since the first test season in 1975:

BREEDERS ON PROGRAM	RAMS ENTERED ON TEST	A.D.G. (SUFFOLK RAM LAMBS)	HEAD SOLD	AVERAGE PRICE (ALL RAM LAMBS)	TOP PRICE
1975 12	85	.32 Kg.	45	$223	$ 525
1976 7	70	.36 Kg.	43	$231	$ 450
1977 14	165	.36 Kg.	53	$244	$ 500
1978 16	155	.42 Kg.	57	$275	$1050
1979 17	123	.49 Kg.	52	$331	$ 675
1980 17	101	.48 Kg.	44	$323	$ 520
1981 23	102	.48 Kg.	40	$375	$ 775
1982 28	115	.47 Kg.	49	$387	$1100
1983 38	173	.514 Kg.	61	$332	$ 750
1984 37	*228	.550 Kg.	72	$384	$1500
1985 38	*202	.534 Kg.	61	$421	$1350

*Includes entries on Wool Breeds test.

Test Station organizers wish to thank everyone involved in making the year and the sale such a success. With continued enthusiasm and support of the type evidenced this year, the 1986 season should be another good one for the Alberta Ram Test Station.

Anyone interested in obtaining more detailed information on the 1985 Alberta Ram Test Station, should contact Station Manager, John Knapp, Sheep Specialist, Bag Service #1, Airdrie, Alberta, Canada, T0M 0B0. Phone (403) 948-5101.

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

SUFFOLK RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
All Land & Livestock, L. & V. Fox, Box 1547, Lloydminster, Sask. S9V 1K5 825-9617								
	ALL533T	180	.585	110	19	$300	3/8	Grey
Barrett Farms, R. Brian & Lorraine, R.R. 2, Okotoks, Alberta TOL 1TO 938-2801								
	BBZ2T	91	.590	110	14	Cull - Legs	1/4	Clean
	BBZ1T	92	.577	108	19	Cull - Legs	1/4	Clean
	BBZ4T	169	.381	71	11	Cull - A.D.G.		
	BBZ5T	170	.498	93	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
Cosens, Roy, Box 236, Morrin, Alberta TOJ 2BO 772-2260								
	COS3T	84	.508	95	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	COS10T	85	.491	92	19	Cull - A.D.G.		

HOME 1 - Ram passed both A.D.G. cull and physical cull but breeder opted to take home - usually for breeding purposes.
HOME 2 - Ram passed A.D.G. cull but breeder opted to take home prior to physical cull.

*G.R. Backfat measurement employs the New Zealand method. Rams are not fatter than in previous years. G.R. measurement produces figures 2 - 2½ times greater than for rams of comparable condition measured under old backfat system.

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Ellis, Barbara, Box 650, Grimshaw, Alberta T0H 1W0 596-2282								
	GWY18	171	.413	77	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	GWY45	172	.609	114	15	Cull - Legs	3/8	Clean
	GWY37	173	.573	107	18	$390	3/8	Clean
	GWY29	174	.635	119	21	$675	1/4	Clean
Gourley, May & Joanne, R.R.3, Site 2,Box 12, High River, Alberta T0L 1B0 652-7116								
	RAT4T	80	.371	69	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
Grab, Wally, Box 401, Rimbey, Alberta T0C 2J0 843-6792								
	WGG23T	126	.544	102	24	Home 1	1/4	Excess black on neck

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Ingratta, Mike, R.R. 2, Okotoks, Alberta TOL 1TO 938-7812								
	PMI16T	51	.448	84	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	PMI12T	81	.518	97	18	Cull - A.D.G.		
	PMI10T	193	.560	105	21	$280	3/8	Clean
	PMI11T	194	.549	103	20	Pass	3/8	Clean
James, Laura & David, R.R. 1, Okotoks, Alberta TOL 1TO 938-7634								
	WHF10T	86	.579	108	21	$425	1/2	Some black-neck & legs
	WHF9T	87	.591	111	15	$550	1/4	Some black on neck
	WHF8T	88	.606	113	17	Home 1	3/8	Some black on neck
	WHF6T	89	.563	105	17	$225	1/4	Some black on neck
	WHF15T	90	.441	83	20	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Jones, Clarence, Box 42, Dewinton, Alberta TOL 0X0 938-7896								
	JXW59T	135	.548	103	17	$225	3/8	Some black on neck
	JXW80T	136	.592	111	15	$325	3/8	Excess blk.-neck & leg
	JXW12T	137	.541	101	21	Cull - Teeth	3/8	Some black on neck
	JXW43T	138	.567	106	22	$410	3/8	Clean
	JXW113T	139	.511	96	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	JXW97T	140	.539	101	16	$225	3/8	Clean
Jordan, Rod, Box 23, Rimbey, Alberta TOC 2V0 843-6763								
	RBS25T	45	.471	88	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RBS28T	182	.528	99	20	Cull - A.D.G.		
Kershaw, Glen & Annette, Box 342, Didsbury, Alberta TOM 0W0 335-4983								
	MZB4T	183	.488	91	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MZB11T	184	.457	86	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MZB12T	185	.563	105	14	Cull-Testicles	3/8	Clean

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Knight, Doug, Site 8, Box 6, R.R.1, Creston, B.C. V0B 1G0 428-4577								
	OKN2T	161	.603	113	15	Dead - Septicemia	3/8	Clean
	OKN5T	162	.488	91	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OKN13T	163	.530	99	20	Cull - A.D.G.		
Kure, Gordon, R.R. 1, Innisfail, Alberta T0M 1A0 728-3361								
	IXJ16T	25	.596	112	19	Cull-Testicles	1/4	Clean
	IXJ35T	27	.601	113	20	Home 2	1/4	Clean
	IXJ13T	28	Pulled off test - Back Injury					
	IXJ22T	29	.412	77	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
	IXJ9T	30	.445	83	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	IXJ28T	31	.588	110	12	$550	3/8	Slight black on neck
	IXJ19T	32	.580	109	24	Cull-Legs,Teeth	3/8	Clean
Layden, Bruce, R.R. 4, Innisfail, Alberta T0M 1A0 227-2415								
	Green4T	177	.563	105	18	$225	3/8	Some black on neck
	3T	178	.578	108	14	$400	3/8	Slight black on neck
	Yello4T	179	.455	85	19	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Lyster, Patric, Box 376, Vilna, Alberta T0A 3L0 636-2007								
	NI015T	78	Pulled off test - Chronic Pneumonia					
	NI041T	164	.488	91	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	NI036T	165	.674	126	17	$360	1/2	Clean
	NI029T	166	.530	99	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
Madsen, Niels & Anne, Box 1202, Drumheller, Alberta T0J 0Y0 823-9158								
	OND34T	55	.549	103	21	Cull - Teeth	3/8	Clean
	OND33T	56	.509	95	14	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OND32T	57	.551	103	16	Cull - Legs	3/8	Clean
Matejka, Bill, Box 819, Ponoka, Alberta T0C 2H0 783-2167								
	HUP81T	188	.554	104	17	$225	1/4	Some black on neck
	HUP52T	189	.518	97	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	HUP53T	190	.626	117	16	$525	3/8	Some black on neck
	HUP90T	191	.509	95	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	HUP80T	192	.638	119	17	$525	3/8	Clean

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Northern Lights College, 11401 - 8 St., Dawson Creek, B.C. V1G 4G2 782-8883								
	LKM14T	175	.559	105	17	Cull - Legs	3/8	Clean
	LKM50T	176	.674	126	16	Cull - Teeth	3/8	Clean
Olds College, (Reg Radke), Farm Manager, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0 556-8261								
	OCL40T	2	Pulled off test - Pneumonia					
	OCL16T	3	.630	118	17	$1050	3/8	Black in fleece
	OCL4T	40	.442	83	21	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OCL7T	41	.530	99	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OCL56T	42	.535	100	17	Home 1	3/8	Some black on neck
	OCL45T	147	.550	103	24	Home 1	3/8	Excess blk.-neck & legs
	OCL13T	148	.463	87	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OCL23T	149	.492	92	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OCL34T	153	.511	96	20	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Pasichney, Dennis, Box 162, Redwater, Alberta T0A 2W0 942-4537								
	MLN8T	52				Dead - Heart Problem		
	MLN15T	53	.556	104	19	$240	1/4	Clean
	MLN16T	54	.494	93	15	Dead - Undetermined		
	MLN71T	118	.564	106	21	$225	3/8	Clean
	MLN39T	119	.487	91	21	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MLN47T	120	.563	105	18	$260	3/8	Clean
	MLN52T	121	.559	105	17	$225	1/4	Some blk. - neck & legs
	MLN17T	122	.529	99	18	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MLN4T	123	.515	96	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MLN28T	124	.556	104	20	Cull - Legs	3/8	Clean
Raven, Mark, Box 1093, Morinville, Alberta T0G 1P0 973-6979								
	DRF28T	100	.507	95	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	DRF10T	101	.528	99	20	Cull - A.D.G.		
	DRF6T	102	.523	98	20	Cull - A.D.G.		
	DRF7T	103	.483	90	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	DRF37T	104	.508	95	16	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Seaborn, Tom, Box 298, Rocky Mountain House, Alberta T0M 1T0 729-2267								
	SLU70T	47	.565	106	15	Home 2		
	SLU12T	48	.565	106	15	$350	3/8	Some black on neck
	SLU7T	49	.517	97	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	SLU63T	50	.605	113	19	$550	3/8	Clean
Smith, Ken, Box 819, Coaldale, Alberta T0K 0L0 327-9369								
	SKL8T	127	.506	95	18	Cull - A.D.G.		
	SKL3T	128	.471	88	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	SKL6T	129	Pulled off test - Scrotal Hernia					
	SKL7T	130	.494	93	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
Sprucevale Farm, Denise Vandenbrink, R.R. 1, Blackfalds, Alberta T0M 0J0 885-5161								
	BEN1T	160	.585	110	17	$510	1/4	Clean

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Stephen, Marian, R.R. 7, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2G7 936-5463								
	LKB13T	70	.423	79	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	LKB47T	71	.581	109	13	$450	3/8	Clean
	LKB21T	72	.506	95	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	LKB52T	73	.437	82	23	Cull - A.D.G.		
	LKB10T	74	.547	102	20	$225	3/8	Slight black on neck
Strand, Walt, S.S. 1-3-63, Lethbridge, Alberta T1J 4B3 327-9306								
	WDS28T	64	.522	98	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	WDS27T	65	Pulled off test - Pneumonia					
	WDS4T	66	.538	101	18	Home 1	1/4	Clean
	WDS13T	67	.573	107	13	Cull-Legs,Teeth	1/4	Some black on neck
	WDS31T	68				Dead - Bloat		
	WDS10T	69	.535	100	19	$225	1/4	Clean
	WDS74T	111	.538	101	19	Cull - Legs	3/8	Some black fibres
	WDS72T	112	.399	75	12	Cull - A.D.G.		
	WDS51T	113	.596	112	23	Cull - Legs	1/4	Clean
	WDS79T	114	.480	90	18	Cull - A.D.G.		
	WDS82T	115	.588	110	17	$400	1/4	Clean
	WDS50T	116				Dead - Septicemia		
	WDS64T	117	.588	110	17	$360	1/4	Clean

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Sudon Farms, Susan Hosford, Box 97, Edberg, Alberta TOB 1J0 877-2226								
	MTK43T	19	.497	93	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MTK13T	20	.454	85	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MTK9T	21	.484	91	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MTK30T	22	.502	94	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MTK49T	23	.485	91	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MTK8T	24	.474	90	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
Waco Cattle Co., Lloyd Pickard, Box 747, Olds, Alberta TOM 1P0 556-6732								
	SMS2T	93	.589	110	16	$750	3/8	Some black on neck
	SMS10T	94	.644	121	19	$1350	3/8	Clean
	SMS1T	95	.473	86	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	SMS3T	96	.570	107	21	$420	3/8	Some black on neck
	SMS5T	97	.443	83	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	SMS20T	98	.637	119	21	Cull - Legs	1/4	Excess blk.-neck & legs
	SMS33T	99	.698	131	19	$950	3/8	Clean
	SMS35T	157	.736	138	16	Cull - Teeth	3/8	Some blk. - neck & legs
	SMS11T	158	.663	124	16	$700	3/8	Clean
	SMS27T	159	.552	103	15	$280	1/4	Some black on neck

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Suffolk Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Wenlock Farms, Jim Kinneburgh, R.R. 2, Red Deer, Alberta T4N 5E2 343-1361								
	TRI17T	60	.432	81	20	Dead - Septicemia		
	TRI11T	61	.515	96	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	TRI8T	62	.461	86	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	TRI23T	63	.420	79	16	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

DORSET RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Francis, Bob, General Delivery, Priddis, Alberta T0L 1W0 931-2258								
	RMJ69S	1	.256	67	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RMJ73S	13	.352	93	11	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RMJ97S	14	.357	94	18	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RMJ67S	15	.427	112	13	$275	3/8	Clean
	RMJ79S	16	.335	87	16	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RMJ103S	17	.289	76	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RMJ98S	18				Dead - Enterotoxemia		
Lyster, Patric, Box 376, Vilna, Alberta T0A 3L0 636-2007								
	PDN25T	79	.375	98	12	Cull - A.D.G.		
	PDN35T	167	.451	118	17	Cull - Legs	1/2	Clean
	PDN38T	168	.468	122	22	Pass	3/8	Clean
Seaborn, Tom, Box 298, Rocky Mountain House, Alberta T0M 1T0 729-2267								
	SLU15T	46	.500	132	19	Dead - Lactic Acidosis	3/8	Trace kemp in wool

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Dorset Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Wagar, Richard & Phyllis, R.R. 5, Wetaskiwin, Alberta T9A 1X2 352-3439								
	WRP173S	4	.429	112	20	$400	3/8	Clean
	WRP231S	5	.359	94	22	Cull - A.D.G.		
	WRP193S	6	.425	111	21	$410	1/4	Clean
	WRP209S	7	.445	116	23	$425	3/8	Clean
	WRP204S	8	.437	114	16	$425	3/8	Clean
	WRP208S	9	.299	78	14	Cull - A.D.G.		
	WRP174S	10	.333	87	22	Cull - A.D.G.		
	WRP205S	11	Pulled off test - Internal Infection					
	WRP185S	12	.350	91	22	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

HAMPSHIRE RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
All Land & Livestock, L. & V. Fox, Box 1547, Lloydminster, Sask. S9V 1K5 825-9617	ALL10T	181	.555	109	17	$240	1/4	Excess black
Ceccato, Vivian, R.R. 3, Eckville, Alberta T0M 0X0 746-5633	VMC10T	105	.571	112	19	$500	1/4	Excess black
Grab, Wally, Box 401, Rimbey, Alberta T0C 2J0 843-6792	WGG13T	125	.538	105	19	$225	1/4	Excess blk.-neck & legs
Jordan, Rod, Box 23, Rimbey, Alberta T0C 2V0 843-6763	RBS32T	43	.454	89	20	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RBS34T	44	.430	84	14	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

Hampshire Rams Continued

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Newman, Peggy, Box 9, Blackie, Alberta TOL 0J0 652-7563								
	MNM68T	141	.562	110	23	$225	1/4	Black on neck & legs
	MNM38T	142	.333	65	14	Cull - A.D.G.		
	MNM20T	143	.514	101	22	Cull - Legs	1/4	Black on neck
Yaklin, Randy, Box 1744, Pincher Creek, Alberta TOK 1WO 627-2947								
	RYA53T	106	.521	102	16	Pass	1/4	Some blk. - neck & legs
	RYA87T	107	.509	100	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	RYA34T	108	.534	105	17	$250	1/4	Clean
	RYA85T	109	.603	118	18	$460	1/4	Some blk. - neck & legs
	RYA33T	110	.505	99	19	Cull - A.D.G.		

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

RAMBOUILLET RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Jackson, Robert & Amy, Box 445, Didsbury, Alberta T0M 0W0 335-4348								
	NLU44T	58	.436	102	15	$375	Fine	V.good crimp,ave.length
	NLU38T	59	.391	92	11	Cull - A.D.G.		
	NLU158T	131	.398	93	11	Cull - A.D.G.		
	NLU129T	132	.408	96	8	Cull - A.D.G.		
	NLU144T	133	.389	91	10	Cull - A.D.G.		
	NLU59T	134	.428	100	10	Home 1	Fine	Ave. crimp & length
	NLY159T	186	.461	108	14	Okay *	Fine	Good crimp;sli. short
	NLY106T	187	.400	94	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
Olds College, Reg Radke, Farm Manager, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0 556-8261								
	OCL215T	39	.408	96	19	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OCL224T	144	.459	108	11	$420	Fine	Uniform crimp;av.length
	OCL203T	145	.372	87	18	Cull - A.D.G.		
	OCL204T	146	.437	103	13	$390	1/2	Uniform crimp;sli.short
	OCL205T	150	.441	104	15	Okay *	Fine	Ave. crimp & length
	OCL244T	154	.461	108	19	Okay *	Fine	Ave. crimp & length
	OCL143T	155	.471	111	15	Okay *	Fine	Good crimp & sli.short
	OCL217T	156	.462	108	17	$375	Fine	Ave. crimp & length

*Ram #186 (Jackson) - Placed on Wool Test
*Rams #150, #154, #155 (Olds College) - Placed on Wool Test

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

POLYPAY RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Balderson, John, Box 643, Magrath, Alberta T0K 1J0 758-6392								
	8386	33	.376	95	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
	8387	34	.356	90	15	Cull - A.D.G.		
	8389	35	.426	107	12	$525	Fine	Good crimp, ave. length
	8394	36	.415	105	13	Cull - Legs	3/8	Ave. crimp, good length
	8322	37	.365	92	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	0377	38	.426	107	17	Okay *	1/2	Good crimp, ave. length
Green, Tom, Box 1497, High River, Alberta T0L 1B0 652-2871								
	G1T	76	.413	104	10	$500	1/2	Good crimp,ave. length
	G4T	77	.355	89	13	Cull - A.D.G.		
	G6T	151	.437	110	16	Okay *	1/2	Ave.crimp;good length
Schlee, Anthony, Box 6, Site 5, R.R.7, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2G7 936-5690								
	22	75	.404	102	14	$525	1/2	Clean uniform crimp
	21	152	.395	99	19	Cull - A.D.G.		

* Ram #151 (Green) - Placed on Wool Test
* Ram #38 (Balderson) - Placed on Wool Test

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

COLUMBIA RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D. NUMBER	STATION EAR TAG NUMBER	A.D.G. (KG)	A.D.G. INDEX	G.R.* BACK FAT (MM)	FINAL STATUS OR SALE PRICE	WOOL GRADE	WOOL QUALITY
Ingratta, Mike, R.R. 2, Okotoks, Alberta TOL 1TO 938-7812								
	PMI2T	82	.374	83	8	Cull - A.D.G.		
	PMI14T	83	.449	100	14	Cull - A.D.G.		
	PMI7T	195	.515	114	21	Cull-Testicles	1/2	V.good crimp;ave.length
	PMI6T	196	.426	95	17	Cull - A.D.G.		
	PMI3T	197	.484	108	20	$275	1/2	Fair crimp;ave. length

1985 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION RESULTS

POLYPAY YEARLING RAM

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	OVER-ALL INDEX	A.D.G. INDEX	WOOL WEIGHT (KG)	WOOL WEIGHT INDEX	FINENESS SH.	FINENESS BR.	FINENESS INDEX SH.	FINENESS INDEX BR.	LENGTH (MM)	LENGTH INDEX	SALE PRICE
Balderson, John Box 643 Magrath, Alberta TOK 1JO 738-6392	8368	14	110	112	6.28	101	54	52	98	100	41	108	$550

RAMBOUILLET YEARLING RAMS

OWNER	LAMB I.D.	STN. EAR TAG	OVER-ALL INDEX	A.D.G. INDEX	WOOL WEIGHT (KG)	WOOL WEIGHT INDEX	FINENESS SH.	FINENESS BR.	FINENESS INDEX SH.	FINENESS INDEX BR.	LENGTH (MM)	LENGTH INDEX	SALE PRICE
Jackson, Robert & Amy Box 445 Didsbury, Alberta TOM 0W0 335-4348	NLU85S	25	103	104	9.18	101	58	56	98	98	31	100	$475
	NLU24S	26	107	112	8.63	95	66	63	112	109	29	94	$300
Olds College (Reg Radke, Farm Manager) Olds, Alberta TOM 1P0 556-8361	OCL71S	4	116	112	12.23	134	56	54	95	95	36	116	$775
	OCL177S	5	115	117	10.19	112	62	60	105	105	32	103	$750

RAISING AND MARKETING TRIPLETS

A truism accepted by 99% of sheep producers is that very few ewes are capable of raising triplet lambs. But it has been proven that ewes can not only raise triplets, but can do so successfully and profitably.

Why attempt to raise triplets? Because it's more profitable. It's more profitable because, of the total feed fed during the year to the ewe and her lamb (up to 110 lb. weight), approximately 75% is expended on the ewe raising a single, 60% on the ewe raising twins, and 50% on the ewe that raises triplets. The more lambs raised per ewe, the lower the ewe maintenance cost each lamb must bear.

Here, in step-by-step fashion, is what one producer does to make raising triplet lambs successful.

1. Faith & Attitude. He knows that his ewes will produce 40 to 50% triplets. He wants to raise triplets and believes it can be done. Others lack his faith. He plans for raising triplets and conditions his ewes properly before they lamb. Others try to rectify their errors after the ewe lambs, which is usually too late. Having a positive attitude and programming his ewes for raising triplets are the key to his success.

2. Ewe conditioning program prior to lambing:

   a) All of his ewes are in good condition prior to lambing. All ewes have sound, capacious udders. He gets them in good condition with a full feed of choice alfalfa hay (17-19% protein) and up to 2 lb. of 16% protein grain ration during the last 3-4 weeks prior to lambing. This is considerably more protein than most producers feed.

   b) He shears 4 weeks before lambing, and vaccinates with C. perfringens C and D two weeks before lambing.

   c) Sixty days prior to lambing, he sorts out thin ewes (ewes most likely carrying triplets) and provides extra grain.

3. Lambing Protocol:

   a) He is present when all ewes lamb so he doesn't lose lambs from chilling.

   b) He jugs the ewe and her triplets in a warm, well-ventilated, well-bedded area. The jug is 4' x 4' or 5' x 5' in area.

   c) He provides ewes with adequate water and excellent legume hay and, over a week's time, gradually increases their intake of 16% protein grain to about 4 lb./ewe daily (fed 2-3 times daily). He deworms all ewes with injectable Tramisol while they are in the jug. Internal parasites are the most sensitive to anthelmintic treatment at this time. More importantly, it reduces the parasite burden prior to the time when worms commence to peak in egg production. Thus, the lambing area does not become highly contaminated.

4. Lamb Management:

   a) He makes certain that every lamb receives adequate colostrum (8-12 ounces/lamb). Colostrum is an absolute must if mortality from pneumonia is to be eliminated.

b) He identifies each ewe and her lambs with a paint brand. Navel cords are dipped in iodine.

c) Triplet lambs are kept in individual jugs for about one week and are then grouped together in groups of only 3 to 4 ewes and their lambs.

d) After 3 weeks, groups of about 10 ewes and their triplet lambs are put together.

e) He vaccinates for soremouth, gives a selenium-vitamin E injection, and docks while the lambs are in the jug.

f) He continues a close watch on the ewes and lambs even after putting them into groups of 10. This is a practice that too many others fail in. Any ewe with mastitis is sorted out and promptly and thoroughly treated. Lambs that are not doing well are removed, along with their dams, to single pens or groups of 3 ewes and kept there until they recover.

g) Lambs are offered a high energy, 18% protein creep diet in a light, well-bedded, draft-free, creep area at one week of age.

5. Weaning Procedure:

He weans triplets at 6-7 weeks of age. He takes great pains in drying off the ewe so as to prevent mastitis. To accomplish this, he eliminates the protein supplement in the ewes' ration and feeds hay with lower protein 2 weeks prior to weaning. One week before weaning, discontinues grain feeding of ewes and withholds water 24 hours after weaning.

He continued the lambs on all-grain, 18% protein ration. At about 8 weeks, he reduces the protein level to about 16% and gradually switches the grain from a rolled diet to whole corn and protein pellets.

This protocol produces triplet lambs that are virtually indistinguishable from his very good twin lambs at 6-8 weeks of age. If he can accomplish this, so can others. There is little or no profit in ewes raising singles. There is considerable profit in ewes weaning twins and triplets.

His success is due to his willingness to take care of the many details, keep a watchful eye for health and production problems, and take an uncommon pride in doing things as well as possible. He carries out his program with help from his wife, who also teaches school full-time.

He has weaned well over a 200% lamb crop from about 200 part-Finn ewes each of the last three years. His high level of accomplishment and willingness to share his methods of production with others were the basis for his winning the Minnesota Sheep Producers Silver Bell Award in 1983. He is Jim Perkins of Woodstock, Minnesota.

(from 1984 Minnestoa Sheep and Lamb Feeders Day Report)

press release

Agriculture Canada

Communications Branch, Agriculture Canada
Ottawa K1A 0C7 (613) 995-8963

J-18

For Immediate Release

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Subject: LIVESTOCK GRADING FEES SET

OTTAWA, April 26, 1985 -- Agriculture Minister John Wise today announced new fees for livestock grading provided by his department.

"These fees were established after extensive consultation with the Canadian meat and livestock industry," Mr. Wise said.

The federal minister has been negotiating with various commodity groups since Agriculture Canada proposed new charges for a number of its services under the government's cost recovery program.

"I've said from the beginning that I thought a mutually satisfactory settlement was possible. We've definitely achieved that in the livestock grading area," Mr. Wise said.

Under the new fee schedule, meat packers will be charged for each carcass graded by Agriculture Canada staff. The fee will be 20 cents a carcass for beef, and nine cents for hogs, lambs and veal. No daily minimum fees, which were originally proposed, are planned at this time.

Meat inspection for hygiene purposes will continue to be provided by the department at no charge during regular hours.

The department will start collecting the grading fees in June. Similar increases are expected in April of next year.

.../2

"The deal is fair and reasonable, allowing the Minister to achieve what he had to achieve, " said Charles Gracey, executive vice-president of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association.

"Throughout this exercise, Mr. Wise has dealt with us honestly and in a straight-forward manner. Our support is based on our industry's willingness to contribute to deficit reduction."

A spokesperson for the Canadian Sheep Council indicated that the council was very happy with the agreement reached with the Minister of Agriculture.

"I feel that we've arrived at a good compromise and appreciate Mr. Wise's willingness to talk openly with us," added Howard Malcolm, president of the Canadian Pork Council.

Mr. Wise said he wanted to continue discussions on cost recovery and look at its application next year. He indicated that his department will also work with industry groups to improve government livestock grading programs.

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For more information, media may contact:

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or

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Food Production and
Inspection Branch
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THE HAYS PROVINCIAL GRAZING RESERVE

Operated in conjunction
with the
BADLAND HILLS SHEEP GRAZING ASSOCIATION

Information supplied by Bill Robertson, Grazing Leases Supervisor and Jerry Reti, Secretary Treasurer

Text prepared by David Field, Consignor

1. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Until 1973 the land had been held under a grazing permit by Benson & MacKenzie. In 1973 the Sheep Producers of Southern Alberta formed an Association and were given a permit on the land. However, the area was only actively grazed on a dryland basis from 1975 onwards.

The Provincial Government, at the urging of the sheepmen, established the area as a Provincial Grazing Reserve in 1979. In conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, an irrigation proposal was outlined to be phased in over a ten year period.

The first pivot system was installed in 1980, the second in 1981 and three-quarters of a mile of wheel-move was developed in 1982. A section pivot has been purchased in 1985 to be operational for the 1986 season.

2. LAYOUT AND DEVELOPMENTS (see map at end of this report)

The total area consisted of 7,000 acres (2,800 ha) of which 950 acres (380 ha) have been broken from native range and seeded (at 15-20 lbs./acre) with the following mixture:

Brome (Magna & Regar)	Bromus inermis
Orchard Grass (Kay)	Dactylis glomerata
Kentucky Bluegrass	Poa pratensis
Alsike Clover &	Trifolium hybridum
Cicer Milkvetch	Astragalus cicer

The improved area is served with two towable pivot systems, each irrigating two 135 acre (54 ha) circles and three wheel-moves irrigating 135 acres (54 ha), 128 acres (51 ha) and 150 acres (60 ha) each. With the inclusion of the additional 550 acres (220 ha) improved in 1985, and provided with a section pivot, the total irrigated area will be 1,500 acres (600 ha) in 1986. Water for irrigation is supplied by the Bow River Irrigation District from a canal on the north side.

Approximately 25 miles (40 km) of fencing and crossfencing have been installed including a perimeter fence.

Four dugouts have been constructed and a new set of corrals and handling pens were completed in 1983.

3. OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT

The day-to-day operations are under the supervision of the Department of Energy and Natural Resources who employ a pasture supervisor, two full-time personnel and two part-time personnel from May to September. These workers are responsible for the irrigation equipment, manning the wheel-moves and towable pivots. Irrigated land is fertilized twice during the growing season using 60 lbs. nitrogen and 30 lbs. phosphorus per acre for the first application, and 60 lbs. nitrogen/acre only for the second application.

The Badland Hills Sheep Grazing Association, under a working agreement with the Department of Energy and Natural Resources, recruit three sheep herders who are responsible to the pasture supervisor for day-to-day operation. Working ten days with four days off ensures that at least two herders are on duty at any one time. During 1985 the sheep have been divided into three flocks for management purposes: two dryland flocks, primarily ewes and weaned lambs, and one flock of ewes with lambs.

The five member elected Board of Directors of the Badland Hills Sheep Grazing Association review the applications of farmers each spring and set the allotments for the year. New entrants are expected to have at least 50 head and the present maximum limit is 400 head per patron. Before entering the reserve, all patrons are responsible for ensuring that their sheep are in good health with clearly marked eartags, paint branded and trimmed hooves.

Sheep are accepted for entry to the reserve about the middle of May (normally different dates for different classes of stock) at which time they are all dewormed, sprayed for keds and inspected by a veterinarian.

Sheep leave the reserve during September and early October, again on specific dates. The total cost of summer grazing facilities provided amounts to approximately $9.00 per A.U.M. (Animal Unit Month).

Losses of sheep during the grazing period in 1984 amounted to 79 ewes and 22 lambs of which 6 were due to coyotes.

4. UTILIZATION

There has been a somewhat rapid buildup of utilization as shown in the following table:

Year	No. of patrons	No. of head grazed
1974-79	10	1,400
1980-81	12	1,800
1982	27	3,100
1983	38	5,100
1984	47	8,402
1985	44	9,000

The effects of improvement have been illustrated by the considerable increase in potential stocking rates:

a) the initial stocking rate of 0.2 A.U.M.'s* per acre allowed for 1,400 ewes to graze for a five month period.

b) during 1984 the irrigated improved pasture stocking rate was considered to be 5 A.U.M.'s per acre thus the total ewe equivalents grazed was:

950 acres @ 5 A.U.M. = 4,750 A.U.M.'s
6,000 acres @ 0.2 A.U.M. = 1,200 A.U.M.'s
5,950 A.U.M.'s

This is an increase of more than four times the initial level.

*One cow (5 ewes or 8 lambs) grazing for one month is one Animal Unit Month (A.U.M.)

5. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

It is anticipated that the improved irrigated pasture areas will be expanded and two more pivot sites are being considered.

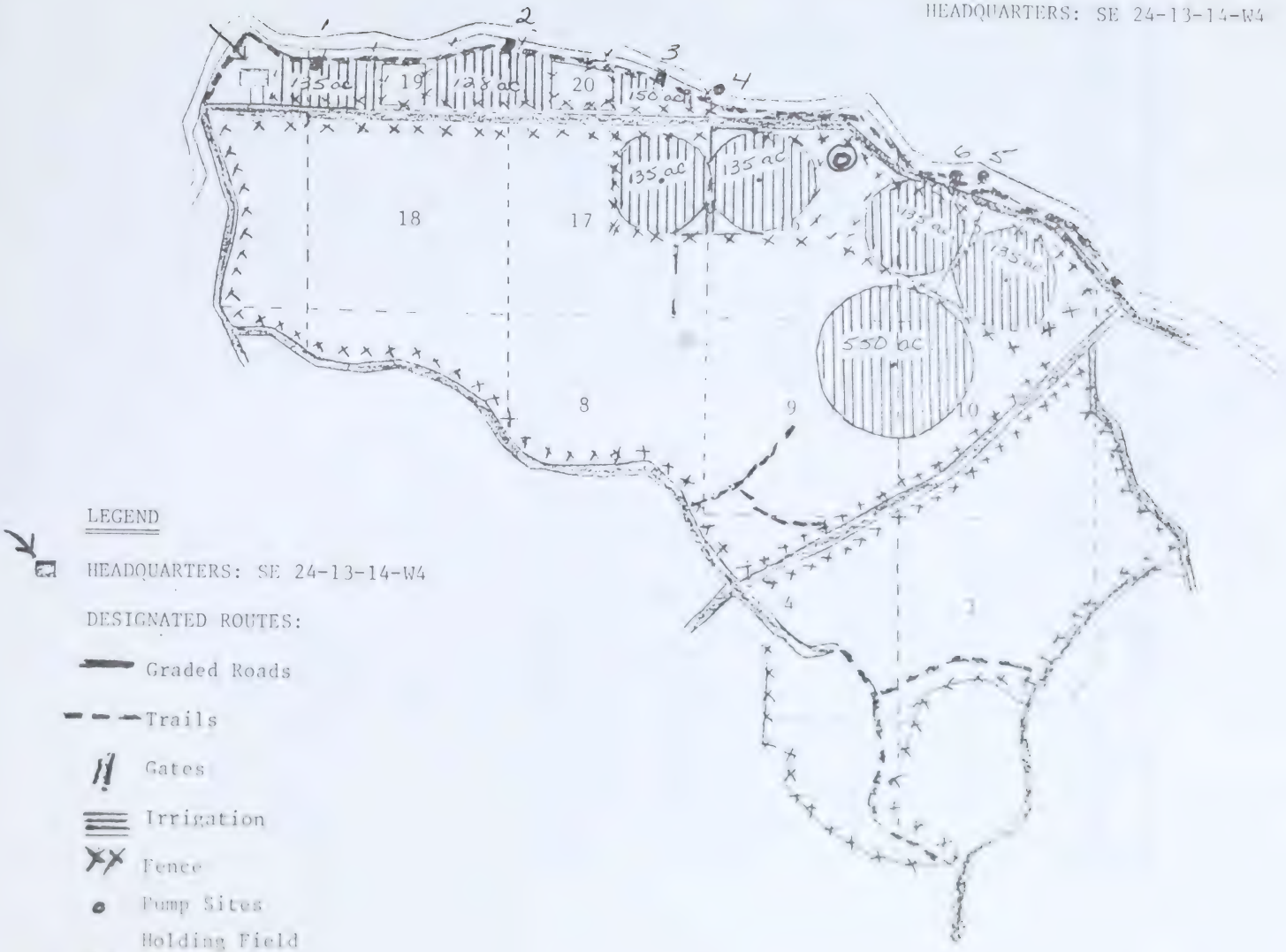
It is hoped to develop the handling facilities at the corrals so that performance data can be derived with the help of a large scale weigh bridge.

It has been agreed that a ram test station will be developed to test pedigree rams under grazing conditions to complement the work being carried out at Olds.

In conjunction with the exit dates in the fall and the possible results of the test station it is planned to organize a sale of stock during late September.

HAYS PROVINCIAL GRAZING RESERVE

HEADQUARTERS: SE 24-13-14-W4



DON SCHEER APPOINTED HEAD OF NUTRITION SECTION

In late December 1984, Don Scheer was appointed Acting Head of the Nutrition Section of the Beef Cattle & Sheep Branch. In his new position, Don supervises feed testing at the Alberta Agriculture Feed Testing Laboratory in the O.S. Longman Building in Edmonton and is also responsible for ration recommendations made by his staff to beef, sheep, swine, dairy, and horse producers. On April 1st this year, Don's appointment became permanent. Don has an extensive background in the nutrition field, including a Masters Degree in Nutrition from U.B.C. and experience in the alfalfa dehy industry.

Some of the highlights of Don's eight year career as Head of the Sheep & Goat Section were the expansion of the technician program, work with the Sheep & Wool Commission on an income stabilization plan, and the many excellent contacts he made with sheep and goat producers throughout Alberta. He looks forward to maintaining many of those contacts through the ration recommendation service offered by Alberta Agriculture and through attendance and speaking engagements at producer meetings.

The Sheep & Goat Section has been amalgamated with another section within the Beef Cattle & Sheep Branch under the new title of Animal Management Section. The new Section Head, Ross Gould, of Edmonton brings many years of experience both as a District Agriculturist and Beef and Warble Specialist to the position. A new Sheep Specialist at the same level as the Airdrie position is expected to be in place in Edmonton by early September.

AT.1.25

sheep notes and news

VOLUME 18, ISSUE #3, SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 1985

INSTANT TURN AROUND TIME NOW AVAILABLE ON R.O.P.! 1

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Animal Industry Division
Beef and Sheep Branch

0 910217

INSTANT TURN AROUND TIME NOW AVAILABLE ON R.O.P.!

John Knapp
Sheep Specialist
Alberta Agriculture
Bag Service #1
Airdrie, Alberta
TOM OBO
Phone: (403) 948-5101

That's right! You can now get a complete set of indexes on lambs and ewes in 20 minutes. The larger your flock, the more money these indexes can make for you by allowing you to make the correct culling and selection decisions. Here's how the program works:

1. Alberta Agriculture recently purchased for a three year period the right to operate Lockhart's Sabre R.O.P. Program (it uses identical adjustment formulas to the Federal R.O.P. program). The program is operated on a micro-computer in the Airdrie office by my secretary - Karren Green.

2. Shortly after lambing, 'prelist' your flock by mailing Karren your lambing records. All she needs is the dam and lamb I.D., birth date, number and sex of lambs born. In the past producers have mailed this to us on the green and white Federal R.O.P. forms. However, so long as the information is complete you are quite welcome to mail it to Karren in whatever format you elect. For example, this could be the shirt pocket note book you use in your lambing barn, or the excellent new manual record keeping system developed by Susan Hosford, Stuart Tucker and Cathy Gallivan in conjunction with the Blindman Valley Sheep Producers. Karren will enter these records into the computer (each producer has his own disk) at the rate of 1 ewe per minute.

3. When you take your 50 day or 100 day weights phone them into Karren at no charge over the government R.I.T.E. system. Karren will hang up the phone and enter these weights into the computer at the rate of 12 lambs per minute while you have a coffee break.

4. She will phone back to you within minutes with the complete set of indexes. Go back out to your corral where the animals you have just weighed are still penned. Sort into high and low indexers check the high indexers for functional soundness and do your culling!

5. There is currently no charge for the program. For more information call me at 948-5101. Watch the next issue of 'Footnotes' for an article on how performance testing can make money for you.

PRODUCTION RECORDS FOR ALBERTA SHEEP PRODUCERS

by Susan Hosford

Early last fall Stuart Tucker, D.A. at Lacombe, myself, Bruce McGhan and the Blindman Valley Sheep Producers got together to come up with ideas for a record keeping system for sheep production.

The producers themselves had developed their own records which ranged from pocket notebooks, loose-leaf scribblers to computer sheets. I myself had twenty-two years of records which showed innumerable changes. I also had a collection of record forms from Ontario, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. As technicians both Bruce and myself had had the opportunity to see records ranging from barn wall chalk marks to personally developed computer programs. All these ideas were sifted through and Stuart and I took them to form a trial set of forms. These forms were sent to volunteer producers with an explanatory letter and were used for the 1985 lambing season.

As you might expect, actually using the forms helped to work out the bugs. We asked for constructive criticism, and we got it. However, the general comment was - 'GREAT'!

This fall Stuart, Cathy Gallivan, John Hull and myself got together to go over the forms and make the changes.

At the Lake Louise Symposium, Stuart Tucker had sample forms at a booth where he talked to producers about the forms. Interested producers signed up for a total of 32 flocks. Since then there have been numerous calls to technicians requesting the forms. The forms will be available very soon for the 1986 lambing season.

The forms are basic requirements for a sound set of records on production:

(a) ewe reproduction information
(b) lamb production - R.O.P. or weigh data
(c) selection, culling, marketing information.

They are simple:

(a) Barn Sheet - lambing record - date, sire, dam, lamb information and comments pertinent to lambing and mothering and health.
(b) Weigh Sheet - the background information from the barn sheet presses through onto a form on which 50 day or weaning weights; 100 day or market weights; and breeding weights may be recorded. This sheet is either sent in, or xeroxed and sent in, to Airdrie and can be used, as is, for R.O.P. - no extra forms to fill in, no conversions - pounds or kilograms work, no duplicating information, no more grey hairs over R.O.P. forms!
(c) Ewe Record Sheet - may be used to record each ewe's yearly production and thereby ease culling and selection decisions.

They may be used together, as a package, or singly to fit in with your existing records (until you see if you want to switch).

The format is such that the sheets are sturdy paper with two holes punched on the top so to fit a two ring clipboard (16" x 9"). It hangs on the barn wall, a solid cover prevents the pages from fluttering in the wind and, with a pencil attached, it's there where you need it and easy to read or write on.

Despite the fact that the sheets are simple to use and readily adapted to most producers' operations, Bruce McGhan and I will hold evening kitchen table sessions for small groups who would like to use the forms - see how they work and see the best way to use them. So get together with a couple of producers in your area and give your technician a call if you're interested. We hope to start in early January and work through to the May lambing season with interested producers.

Since John Knapp's article has no doubt got you all seriously considering pre-listing your flock on R.O.P., I just have to add that this record system, used correctly, is completely compatible with a computer program either in Airdrie or in your home. It forms a clear and easily deciphered log book from which computer entries are taken. You can send in or use your own pocket notebook, even the barn door, if that's where your records are and the information can be used for R.O.P. feedback. However, your notebook, with the parts list for the truck, reminders, scrawls, doodles and code names will take anyone (perhaps even yourself) hours to decipher. The chances of lost information and errors are immense, even if you are willing to spend time on the phone explaining things. So..... There's a better way. If you are seriously looking at your flock's production, working to make a better income from your sheep, or have admitted there is a gap somewhere in your production information --- perhaps you should seriously consider these record forms.

If you are interested in registering for the record forms please fill out and send in this form.

_____ Yes I Am Interested

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

No. Ewes in Flock _____

Currently on R.O.P.? _____

Send To: Cathy Gallivan
Sheep Specialist
2nd Floor, J. G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

REPORT ON
SYNCHRONIZATION WORKSHOP

by Susan Hosford

November 2, 1985 a synchronization workshop was held at our farm. In the morning the theory was presented, the "how" and "why" of synchronizing ewes. (My apologies to the Angora breeders in my area - we found that everything applicable to sheep was applicable to goats - so call if you feel you're interested).

Barry Callaghan, Reproductive Physiologist and Acting Head of the Reproduction Section talked about and illustrated how sponging a ewe affects her heat cycle. He gave us an in-depth background into the theory of heat synchronization.

I talked about the practical, on-farm application of synchronization. How to use it to save on feed and labour; to better utilize your facilities, ewe flock and rams; and how to use it to produce lambs more than once a year and so extend your cash flow. I also spent a fair amount of time stressing the importance of basic flock management for production:

(1) ewe health
(2) ewe nutrition/flushing
(3) condition scoring
(4) ram power
(5) ram fertility.

As with natural breeding any one of those 5 items can dramatically affect your lamb crop and lambing percentage. Each one of the 5 becomes even more critical when using heat synchronization - the success of the whole operation depends on the manager's attention to detail.

The actual demonstration came after lunch. Each participant condition scored the ewes that she/he were to sponge, checked for I.D. and/or backbranded the ewe with her group number. Finally, each participant sponged one or two ewes and found it not at all difficult. It is a procedure which must be done cleanly and carefully but anyone can do it. The planning; recording groups, due dates, etc.; the penning for several groups while breeding; and the juggling of rams and clean-up rams is definitely the trickiest part. There were some sample record sheets handed out to help keep things straight. There were also numerous articles available to participants on synchronization. If anyone wishes the information please contact Cathy Gallivan (427-5077). Thanks go to Cathy for providing the information sheets, coffee and donuts.

Bruce McGhan did some pregnancy detection on both sponged and pregnant ewes. Participants could work at the technique until they felt competent. I was happy to see only one of our bred group showed up open! There is also an article on pregnancy detection in the information package.

Thanks to Gordon Kure who ran the video outfit. We hope to have the session available for use for small groups of producers interested in the technique.

I would like to add here that if you have a group of producers in your area who would be interested in a demonstration be it synchronizing, or something else, please call your technician (well in advance) and we will see what we can arrange.

TENTATIVE DATES AT SUDON 1986

Pre-lambing, Shearing and Vaccinating	1st week January
Lambing	January 23 - February 15 (Synchronized ewes) April 12 - May 15 (Natural and synchronized ewes, ewe lambs)
Synchronizing	April 30th

You're welcome to participate, please call ahead.

Synchronization Demonstration

This is a follow-up for the participants. If you missed the demonstration, please don't feel left out, call me and I'll fill you in on the details. Sue 877-2226

Group I
- 7 ewes (condition scores 2.0-3.5)
- 5 sponged (1 thin, 1 crippled by dogs
- of those 5:
  - (a) 1 lost sponge not bred by ram (red marker) during 2 day mating. Now with clean up ram (black marker)
  - (b) 1 not marked - the lowest condition score of the sponged group (2). She had weaned triplets in February and twins now. With clean up ram now.
  - (c) 3 well-marked
  - (d) 1 crippled ewe (not sponged; condition score 2.5) marked by ram during 2 day mating. Guess she'd felt left out!

Group II
- 4 ewes sponged (condition scores: 3.5-4.0)
  - (a) 1 lost sponge - no marks
  - (b) 3 well marked

Group III
- 11 ewes sponged (condition scores: 3-4)
  - (a) 3 lost sponges - no marks
  - (b) 7 well marked
  - (c) 1 no mark

Watch for the continuation of this exciting synchronization saga. Next episode: "Lambing - 1986".

MANAGEMENT TACTICS FOR SYNCHRONIZATION - THE RAM
Presented By Susan Hosford
At The Synchronization Workshop
November 2, 1985

1. Your ram plays a critical role in any synchronization program. ALL IS LOST IF HE HAS PROBLEMS OF ANY KIND. At least one month before using him for breeding:

(a) feed him so he can maintain a good body condition plus produce lots of good quality semen. Semen production takes several months so be prepared ahead of time.
(b) check and trim his feet well ahead of breeding. Sore feet are a distraction he doesn't need.
(c) de-worm him.
(d) have your vet blood test him for Brucella ovis. The test results take about 10 days to come back. Brucella ovis is very common and devastating to ram fertility.

2. In pen-mating systems (the best one for synchronizing - a pasture takes too much time and energy out of your ram), make sure the rams are familiar with their pens, feeding routines, and location of water ahead of time.

3. Try to bring new rams home 2 weeks ahead of breeding and if he will be working with other rams confine them all to a small pen or your pick-up truck so they sort things out without killing each other.

4. When given a choice, rams tend to select and mate with older ewes rather than young ones, and ones of their own breed before ewes of another breed. So split your flock accordingly.

5. Crayon/paint marks are not completely reliable, especially with aggressive rams, virgin rams, or with ewe lambs who might be marked but not mated. Oh, the stories that come out on this topic! So don't lay overly large wagers on Fleecy's lambing date if you're basing it on her being colored red from head to toe.

6. A marker harness, on for the first time this year, adds stress - so it is preferable to use it on your clean up rams. Use a paint powder and mineral oil paste painted on the main ram's brisket (between front legs) if you want to keep track.

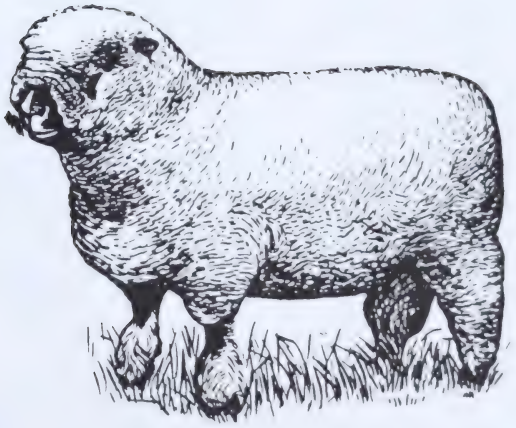
7. Young rams will be less effective in synchronizing. They also work poorly when used with older rams, or when in an open pasture situation.

8. If you are running several rams - WATCH THEM. Be sure your dominant (boss) ram is the one you want the most lambs from. Be sure he lets the other rams work and does some work himself. A two ram situation often reduces ram effectiveness while 3 rams increases it. WATCH THEM.

9. Age, temperature, season, nutrition, disease and breeding all have been found to greatly affect ram fertility. High environmental temperature, fever, fly strike, lameness and testicle infections can very quickly cause sterility. Recovery from even a minor heat stress takes a minimum of six weeks. Stress (shipping, mixing with new rams, predator problems) is often the cause of lowered fertility.

Keep rams cool, well-fed, and healthy prior to and during breeding.

FERTILE RAMS = more ewes settled earlier
potentially more twins
successful synchronization



ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION NOTICE

1986 RAM TEST STATION

OLDS COLLEGE

ENTRY DATES: February 20
March 6 & 20
April 3

You are invited to enter ram lambs into this year's station test. See attached regulations for details.

VETERINARY INSPECTION: (New Contributors)
Please as soon as you have decided to enter rams into this year's station test, contact Station Manager, John Knapp (948-5101) so the pre-entry veterinary inspection can be arranged where required.

PLEASE FILL IN AND MAIL THE ATTACHED ENTRY FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

REGULATIONS

1986 ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION

A. ELIGIBILITY

1) Any sheep breeder may enter purebred ram lambs which are registered or eligible for registration. Ewe lambs will not be accepted on test.

2) All ram lambs born in the fall of 1986 or later will be eligible for test.

3) All out-of-province contributors will be required to submit a flock health certificate signed by a qualified veterinarian. This certificate must be obtained from:
Dr. Ralph Shute
Alberta Agriculture
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
Phone (403) 436-9343

4) Any contributor may be subject to a flock health inspection at the discretion of the station management.

5) All rams will be carefully inspected on arrival at the station and may be refused entry for health reasons.

6) All rams must have their feet trimmed prior to delivery.

7) It is recommended that all lambs be vaccinated for enterotoxemia at least two weeks prior to delivery.

8) Rams which pass the veterinary inspection on arrival will immediately be:
a) weighed
b) ear tagged with a test station identification number
c) fecal sampled
d) dewormed
e) vaccinated with an 8-way clostridial booster and soremouth vaccine
f) footbathed (zinc sulphate)
g) 5 days after entry lambs will receive an injection of long-acting oxytetracycline

9) During the early stages of the test all rams will be
a) blood-sampled for brucella ovis
b) vaccinated again, with an 8-way booster and soremouth vaccine

10) All lambs will be sheared after the last group is off test and before the cull for physical defects.

11) Following the completion of test, a performance report will be issued which will include:
   a) actual on-test weight of each lamb
   b) actual off-test weight of each lamb
   c) average daily gain on test of each lamb (indexed)
   d) ultrasonic back fat measurement of each lamb
   e) wool quality
   f) overall within-breed performance evaluation

12) Lambs will be ranked on the basis of A.D.G. index and the sale catalogue will be published on this basis.

13) Visitors to the test station while lambs are on test, are encouraged, but interested persons are advised to contact Barry Wilson (556-8202 or 8213) prior to their arrival.

14) No animal will be released from the station prior to the end-of-test without permission of the station manager. The manager reserves the right to reject any animal during the test and request the owner to remove it from the station.

B. HEALTH REGULATIONS

1) Sheep which come from a blue tongue area as defined by Agriculture Canada will not be accepted.

2) Prior to accepting lambs on test, all new contributors' flocks must be inspected and found free of communicable disease or condition potentially dangerous to the health of other animals at the station. The inspection will be made by a veterinarian named by the Veterinary Services Division, Alberta Agriculture.

   (NOTE: In 1986, rams with clinical evidence of soremouth will not be accepted.)

C. TEST CONDITIONS

1) Lambs are to be delivered to the test station by the breeder or his representative on either February 20, March 6 & 20, April 3, 1986 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. At delivery, live weight of each lamb must be between 22.7 kg (50 lbs) and 31.8 kg (70 lbs) for Suffolk and Hampshire breeds and 20.5 kg (45 lbs) and 29.5 kg (65 lbs) for other breeds. NOTE: There are no limitations on the number of lambs a breeder may enter on test. However, if pen space becomes a problem, those breeders entering more than 10 rams may be required to limit their entries.

2) At the time lambs are delivered to the station, contributors must submit completed application for registration and completed transfer forms for each lamb. If these are not received before the end of test, the animal will not be eligible for entry into the test station sale.

3) All lambs must be tatooed prior to arrival.

4) All lambs entered will be fed in groups governed by the following:
   a) lambs from each entry date will be kept separate
   b) Large and small breeds will be kept separate where possible

5) Following an 11-day adjustment period, all lambs will commence an official 56-day performance test. They will be weighed on-test and every two weeks thereafter. All test weights will be an average weight of two consecutive days.

6) All lambs will be fed a pelleted complete ration, free choice, and hay.

7) Salt & mineral will be available free choice.

8) Each pen shall have individual feeders and automatic waterers.

9) All lambs will have their feet trimmed as required.

D. GENERAL

1) The Alberta R.O.P. Sheep Advisory Committee reserve the right to make all decisions regarding the ram test station.

2) The Committee consists of the following:

Mr. Stu Eagles - Agriculture Canada Representative
Mr. Carl Rose - Buyer Representative
Mr. Brian Murray - Alberta Sheep & Wool Commission Representative
Mr. Alvin Robbins (S.Alta) - Contributor Representative
Mr. Reg Marler (N.Alta) - Contributor Representative
Mr. Ron Weisenburger (Chairman) - Alberta Agriculture Representative
Mr. Ross Gould - Alberta Agriculture Representative
Dr. Ralph Shute - Veterinary Services Division Representative, Alberta Agriculture
Ms. Sue Hosford - National R.O.P. Committee Executive Representative
Ms. Cathy Gallivan (Secretary) - Alberta Agriculture Representative
Mr. John Knapp - Home Test Coordinator & Test Station Manager - Alberta Agriculture Representative

F. TEST FEES

1) Alberta Agriculture will provide the test station, the required manpower, facilities, inspection, technical assistance and supervision. Breeders entering rams on test shall pay for the feed and extra veterinary expenses only.

2) There shall be a $40 fee per lamb entered on test; half will be payable upon reservation of pen space, and the remainder payable upon delivery to the station. If the feed and veterinary expenses exceed $40 per lamb, an additional charge will be made upon completion of test. If the expenses per lamb are less than $40 the difference will be refunded.

OUT-OF-PROVINCE BREEDERS

Since Alberta Agriculture is subsidizing the test station and sale to the level of approximately $40 per animal, contributors from outside the province will be required to pay an additional $40 per animal above the aforementioned fee.

3) Cheques or money orders for fees should be made payable to Olds College.

4) All fees connected with the ram test station must be paid before any animal is released.

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING SALE OF SHEEP

CONTRIBUTORS RESPONSIBILITY

Entries for the ram sale will be received only from persons who have entered sheep in the Ram Test Station at Olds College in 1986.

The cost of transferring the animal when sold to the purchaser must be paid by the seller and the actual transfer paperwork is also the responsibility of the seller.

All rams entered for sale shall be docked.

All animals offered for sale must have been owned by the contributor at least 60 days prior to the sale.

Every animal offered for sale must be in sound health and free from physical defects.

All animals entered for sale shall be inspected by a Culling Committee and shall be subject to rejection if found unsatisfactory in any way.

All rams will be shorn prior to sale.

BREEDING GUARANTEE

Contributors to this sale guarantee that, subject to proper treatment, with care and exercise, all animals are warranted to be breeders. In case an animal proves to be a non-breeder, and providing the purchaser notifies the contributor within 6 months and proves his case, the contributor shall make adjustment and shall have the opportunity of selecting one of the following options:

1) refund one-half the purchase price

2) take the animal back and supply one of equal value contributor paying the transportation charges on the animal returned and the purchaser paying transportation charges on the replacement animal.

3) Take the animal back, paying transportation charges on same and refunding total purchase price.

The seller shall have the right, if he so desires, to try a ram for 30 days before making final adjustments to determine the ram's usefulness or lack of usefulness as a breeder.

Any contributor refusing to make adjustments of claims approved by the Advisory Committee may be refused the privilege of future sales held by the R.O.P. Committee.

The Station Manager shall have the power to reject any entry.

All animals entered for the sale must be identified in accordance with the requirements of the Canadian National Livestock Records. Tattoo and tags must correspond with the pedigree.

ORDER OF SALE FOR SHEEP

Every care will be exercised by the Station Management to prevent injury to or loss of property, and to ensure the prompt collection and delivery of animals to the proper destination, but the Station Management, acting only as a medium between buyer and seller, will not be responsible for any loss or damage whatsoever that may occur.

All purchases must be settled for during or immediately after the close of the sale. Buyers are particularly requested to note this rule.

At every sale, each bid shall be an offer by the person making the same to purchase the animal put for sale, and such offer shall be deemed accepted by the fall of the hammer of the Auctioneer, and there upon a contract of sale shall be created.

No purchaser shall retract a bid after the hammer falls.

The purchaser must file with the Station Management and the contributor, within 6 months of the date of sale, a protest or affidavit that the animal is a non-breeder.

The Station Management will act as Agent only.

Immediately after each purchase is declared and the animal removed from the sale ring to the pen by the seller, the risk thereof shall be exclusively with the purchaser, and until such settlement is made in terms of these conditions, the delivery of the animal or animals shall not be made.

Before an animal can be removed from the building, the buyer must present to the pavilion doorman an order signed by the clerk and give a receipt for the animal. This order must be left with the pavilion doorman and will be evidence of the delivery of the stock. Owners of animals that have been passed through the ring or have not been sold should procure an order from cashier's office before taking them out of the grounds.

Alberta Agriculture and/or Olds College shall have the power to give receipts in full, for all payments on stock and will remit the amount realized, less the proper charges for each animal, to the seller thereof, as quickly as possible after the sale.

STATION MANAGEMENT

It is to be clearly understood that the Station Management is only acting as a medium between buyer and seller and is not in any way responsible for any failure on the part of either party to live up to his obligations. Neither does the Station Management assume any financial obligation to collect or enforce collection of any monies between parties, and any legal action that may, in exceptional cases, be taken, must be between the buyer and seller themselves.

In all cases however, the influence of the Station Management will be exerted, as far as possible, to hold all parties strictly to these regulations.

The Station Management reserves the right to decide any point not covered by the rules but necessary in the proper regulation and management of the sale.

The Station Management acts as agent only, and is responsible to the seller only for the proceeds of the sale when received.

All fees connected with the Ram Test Station must be paid before any animal is released.

ALBERTA RAM TEST STATION & SALE - 1986

(APPLICATION FORM)
(Please Print)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____

ANIMALS TO BE ENTERED:

ENTRY DATE	NUMBER OF RAMS	BREED

It is hereby understood that all lambs submitted by me to the Alberta Ram Test Station - 1986, and the Alberta Ram Test Station Sale - 1986 are at my risk, and that neither Alberta Agriculture, Olds College, nor any persons employed by them will be liable in the event of death, sickness or injury to animals entered into the above programs.

I have read and agree to abide by the regulations of the test station and sale.

NOTE: This year pedigree information in the catalogue will be extended to include grandsires and grandams of animals offered for sale. Please present this information as well as applications for registration and transfer when you enter rams.

SIGNED: _____
(Contributor)

Please return this form immediately with a $20 deposit per ram to:

John Knapp
Sheep Specialist
Alberta Agriculture
Bag Service #1
Airdrie, Alberta T0M 0B0
Phone (403) 948-5101

MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO
OLDS COLLEGE

Lamb Research at the Lacombe Research Station

S.D. Morgan Jones
Head, Meat Research Station

Statistics reveal two important points when discussing the future viability of lamb production in Alberta. Per capita carcass disappearance of lamb has declined 32% in the last 10 years (2.8 lbs to 1.9 lbs per capita), and domestic lamb production only supplies 45% of the Canadian market. These are major problems which cannot be solved overnight, but are influenced by both the present production and marketing procedures for domestically produced lamb.

Lamb producers have often commented that marketing a heavy lamb (> 110 lbs) would increase profitability on the production side of the industry and provide the consumer with a more desirable product. A heavy lamb carcass (> 58 lbs) would have larger cuts than those currently marketed, and this would be beneficial for rib and loin chops, which are often regarded by the consumer as wasty (high bone) and poor value for money in comparison to other protein sources eg. pork. However, a major concern at the retail level is the marketing of larger shoulders and legs and the possibility of greater deposits of fat on lamb cuts from heavy lamb carcasses. Producers have also suggested that present lamb carcass grading standards need to be revised to more accurately identify differences in carcass quality as is currently practised in the swine and beef industries. No useful data base on lamb composition or quality has been assembled in Canada to allow decisions to be made concerning the feasibility of heavy weights for lambs, or for the design of new carcass grading standards.

At the request of producers, the Lacombe Research Station initiated a major lamb research project in 1985 to compile a lamb carcass composition and quality data base. The project is presently financially supported by the Federal Government of Canada, the Province of Alberta through the Farming for the Future program, the Province of Ontario through the Red Meat Research program and the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission. The project will run for 3 years (1985-87) to gather the required information and will use approximately 1300 lambs produced in Alberta.

The priorities of the project are as follows:

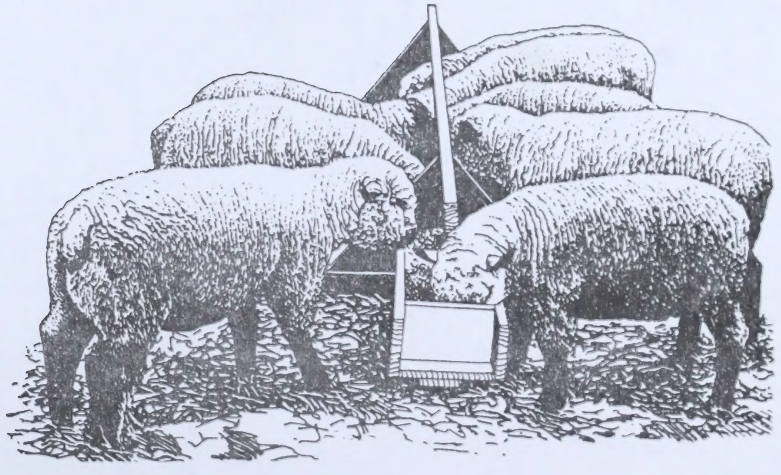
1. Investigate composition and quality of lamb carcasses as influenced by liveweight, age and sex. Lambs covering a liveweight range from 80-160 lbs and varying in age from 3-15 months will be evaluated for carcass composition and meat quality (laboratory measures, taste panel and consumer panel).

2. Develop a more accurate system of lamb carcass grading. An electronic grading system is being tested whereby fat and muscle thicknesses are recorded automatically on the kill floor which could replace the present subjective system of lamb grading.

3. Examine new methods of processing lamb carcasses to reduce the cost of processing and make larger cuts (shoulders and legs) more acceptable to the consumer. Hot processing (removal of meat on the kill floor), electrical stimulation and temperature specifications for chilling boneless lamb without impairing product quality will be evaluated.

4. Increase the retail case life of fresh lamb. Although the bulk of Alberta lamb is marketed in a fresh condition its retail case life is limited in comparison to frozen imported lamb. Combination of new processing technology with packaging (vacuum packaging) will be investigated to increase the retail case life of fresh lamb.

5. Consumer acceptability of larger cuts. Consumer survey work will be conducted in major stores in the metropolitan centres of Alberta to assess the effect of cut size on product acceptability.

Once completed (1987), this project will identify optimum slaughter weights for lambs and will establish if heavier carcasses have acceptable meat quality and consumer acceptability. It is also expected that this project will result in improved carcass grading standards for lambs and provide information on the feasibility of introducing new processing technology in lamb slaughter operations.

For further information the contact person at Lacombe is Dr. Carol Pierson (403) 782-3316 Ext. 256.